

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying a computer user of a computer information message, comprising the steps of:

determining if a condition associated with a received action requires generation of an information message;

selecting an information message to be generated corresponding to said condition;

identifying a target object associated with the action performed by the user, to which the information contained within the notification message relates; ~~and~~

displaying a ~~collapsible~~ notification object in a first state, which indicates the target object and contains said information message corresponding to said condition, in a persistent manner until dismissed ~~or collapsed~~ by a user while enabling the user to continue interaction with an application program corresponding to said target, and

selectively displaying said notification object in a second, collapsed state having a reduced size relative to said first state.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object comprises a warning.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object comprises an error message.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object comprises a notification.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object includes a cartouche which points to the target.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of displaying includes providing a video animation sequence.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of displaying includes generating an audio indicator.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein said notification object ~~collapses~~ is displayed in said collapsed state in response to a mouse event.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein said notification object contains an icon, and ~~collapses~~ is displayed in said collapsed state in response to a mouse click on the icon.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein said notification object ~~collapses~~ is displayed in said collapsed state in response to a keyboard command.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object is persistent and remains displayed until said condition is removed.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object is displaced from said target object so that it does not obscure said target object.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object is non-modal and enables the user to continue interaction with an application program corresponding to said target while said object is being displayed.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said notification object enables a user to interact with application programs other than the application program corresponding to said target, while said object is being displayed.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
hiding the notification object when an application associated with said target is  
inactive; and

displaying the notification object when an application associated with said target is  
active.

18. (Currently Amended) A system for notifying a computer user of a computer  
information message, comprising:

means for receiving an action performed on a computer by a user;

means for determining if the received action requires generation of a computer  
information message;

means for selecting a computer information message to be generated corresponding  
to said action performed by the user;

means for locating a target object corresponding to the action performed by the  
user, to which the information contained within the notification message relates; ~~and~~

means for displaying a persistent, non-modal, ~~collapsible~~ notification object in a first  
state which indicates the target object, contains said information message corresponding to  
said target object, is persistent until dismissed ~~or collapsed~~ by the user, and enables  
continued interaction by the user with the target while the object is being displayed, and

means for selectively switching the display of said notification object to a second,  
collapsed state having a reduced size relative to said first state.

19. (Currently Amended) A graphical user interface element for providing a user with information regarding a computer application being executed, comprising a persistent, non-modal ~~collapsible~~ notification object containing ~~information relating to a target within said computer application and~~ an indication mechanism which forms part of said object and points to ~~the~~ a target within said computer application with which the computer notification object is associated, said user interface element being displayed in a first state that contains information relating to said target and being selectively switchable to a second, collapsed display state that omits at least some of said information.

20. (Original) The user interface element of claim 19, wherein said information comprises text information;

21. (Currently Amended) The user interface element of claim 19, further comprising an icon disposed within said object ~~relating to said information.~~

22. (Original) The user interface element of claim 21, wherein said icon comprises an on-screen button for receiving user interaction.

23. (Original) The user interface element of claim 19, wherein said indication mechanism comprises a cartouche.

24. (Original) The user interface element of claim 19, further comprising an audio indicator for indicating the display of the notification object on a computer screen to a user.

25. (Original) The user interface element of claim 19, wherein said notification object is displayed with animation.

26. (Currently Amended) A computer program stored in a computer-readable medium which executes the following steps:

receiving an action performed on a computer by a user;

determining if the received action requires generation of an information message;

selecting an information message to be generated corresponding to said action performed by the user;

locating a target object corresponding to the action performed by the user, to which the information contained within the information message relates; and

displaying a ~~collapsible~~ notification object in a first state which indicates the target and contains said information message corresponding to said target object;

selectively displaying said notification object in a second, collapsed state having a reduced size relative to said first state;

wherein said displayed notification object is persistent until dismissed ~~or collapsed~~ by the user; and

wherein said notification object is non-modal and enables the user to continue interaction with an application program corresponding to said target while said object is being displayed.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

receiving an action performed on a computer by a user;

wherein said step of determining is performed on the action received in said step of receiving.

28. (New) The user interface element of claim 22, wherein said user interface element is switched to said collapsed state in response to user interaction with said icon.

29. (New) The computer program of claim 26, wherein said notification object includes a control element, and is displayed in said collapsed state in response to user activation of said control element.